

## HE GAINED THE TOUCH OF MIDAS

It Proved a Deadly Curse to the Man Who Coveted Its Power.

"You impudent puppy! How dare you aspire to my daughter? You, you!" his voice choked, and too much enraged for further utterance, Millionaire Anderson sank back in his chair and gazed fiercely at the young man before him.

Charles Hendricks raised his head proudly.

"It is true, Mr. Anderson, that I have aspired to your daughter's hand, but the fact that I love her and other her hand and heart can hardly be termed impudence."

Mr. Anderson gasped. "May I ask, Mr. Hendricks, what your prospects are?"

"My salary is small, but I expect a raise soon, and then, we love each other."

"Hah! Love in a cottage, I suppose. Starvation is the real name. Very pretty in poetry, I'll admit, but in life, nonsense. Let me hear no more of this, young man, until you have a million back of you. Then we'll talk!"

"Why not make it two?" cried the young man, hotly, losing control of himself. "The one is as easy to get as the other."

"Two it shall be," returned the millionaire, sarcastically, becoming cool as the other lost his temper. "I'll think myself that it is nearer the mark."

"Perhaps you will allow me a year to obtain it," suggested Charles, reaching for his hat.

"Why not make it two?" suggested the elder man, pleasantly.

"Two it shall be," returned Hendricks, furiously. "We will consider it a bargain, then. Adela is mine, provided that I am worth \$2,000,000 at the end of two years. Very well, sir, I shall have it. Good day."

Charles Hendricks strode moodily down State street, and mechanically entered a restaurant. The time was 6 o'clock in the evening, and the place was full. Presently his ear was caught by some remarks of two young men sitting at the same table that aroused his interest.

"Yes," one was saying, "he looks like a veritable sheik. He is really an Arabian, and is indeed a wonder. He claims that through inoculation of certain plants man can become what he will for the time being. You know—"

(naming the successful author of a recent book). "He attributes his success to treatment from this Arab. All Chicago is raving over him."

"Let us go see him after we have finished. We can find out his method, and if we wish, try it. I confess that I am curious."

"Pardon me," interrupted Charles, addressing them. "I could not help but hear your conversation, and it has interested me. Will you give me the address of this man?"

"No. 1042 Cottage Grove avenue. We are going out there as soon as we have finished our supper. We would be glad of your company."

Charles found that one of his companions had poetical aspirations, while the other was a budding politician; 1042 Cottage Grove avenue was reached in due time. It was a modest, unpretending building of conventional pattern without, but upon being admitted, they were impressed by the Oriental nature of the furnishings.

Rugs of rich workmanship and rare coloring covered the floors; the walls were concealed by tapestries; the furniture consisted of bamboo chairs and tables. An atmosphere subdued, warm and perfumed pervaded the apartment into which they were ushered by an Arabian, presumably a servant or slave.

After passing through several rooms, all furnished according to the same Oriental plan, they came to a conservatory filled with rare exotics. Opening off from the conservatory was a small apartment, which proved to be the laboratory of the philosopher.

Retorts, crucibles, flasks filled with liquids of various colors, all the paraphernalia of the chemist, littered the room, which was occupied by two persons.

One, an aged man clothed in the white flowing garments of the Orient, advanced to meet them. A long beard which reached almost to the hem of his garment, and which gave him a patriarchal look, concealed the lower part of his face. While having the appearance of age, there was so much of energy and alertness in his manner that one received the impression of unbounded vitality.

"Have ye also come to try the skill of the philosopher?" he asked, in a musical voice.

"We have, O, O—the politician hesitated.

"Dr. Abdullah," completed the Arabian. "I am but the exponent of the art of Alkimia. Ministering to the mind of man instead of his body. He seated, while I continue with this young man."

He turned to the other occupant of the room, whom Charles recognized as a writer of occasional stories for the newspapers.

"Thou art warned, my son; dost thou still wish to continue?"

"Prove, doctor, said the other, firmly. "I am but the exponent of the art of Alkimia. Ministering to the mind of man instead of his body. He seated, while I continue with this young man."

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nel for strength; azalea for invention, and now, let us pour this mixture of aloe and prickly pear that thy style may be clear-cut, brilliant and satirical; then we finish with the precious extract of immortelle, that thou mayest attain to that fame which it vouchsafed to but few."

He rolled down the sleeve, made a parcel of the extracts and handed it to the young fellow.

"There is enough for five years of wonderful productiveness. Be industrious while it lasts. Thou knowest the consequences."

The young man bowed and left the room.

"And now, gentlemen, which shall be first?"

The poet stepped forward. "Give me, doctor, the 'divine afflatus' of poetry, that my verses may be recognized."

"Verily, they are many who woo the muse," remarked the Arabian. "But thy case is simple. Thou needst but few extracts. O poet, a little of this bleeding heart; much of the night blooming cereus; and thy verses shall glow with fervor, and by their identity. Use but sparingly for the reaction is severe. Now thy friend."

"I would be a successful politician," said the other boldly. "Can you aid me?"

"But use my skill and thou wilt be satisfied with the result," was the reply. "But first, count the cost; these extracts will give thee success. For a time thou shalt attain to heights no dreamed of by thee, but after a time comes defeat. From thence day height to which thou hast ascended, thou shalt fall. One by one thy friends will leave thee. With despair, which in thy case is but the eagerness of hope, thou wilt still seek office. Defeated on every side, thou wilt at last succumb to thy disappointment, and thy days will be ended in a madhouse. Art thou willing to give so much for success?"

"Oh, that's all right. No man expects to be a winner all the time. If your drugs can give me the success you say, I will abide by the result."

The philosopher turned to his shelves. "Statesman or politician? Which shall it be?" The politician reaps his harvest with his own hands; the future brings appreciation to the statesman."

"Politician, by all means," laughed the other. "I never yearned for posthumous reward."

"Then we will take the mistletoe, which, as thou knowest, is parasitic in growth, feeding upon whatever will give it sustenance. Sweet William for suavity and an insinuating manner; rosemary for memory; hart's tongue for a silvery speech. A little of this money plant will give thee the necessary 'itching palm.' In thy right hand we will put this acanthus for muscular contraction in handshaking. There, son! Thou hast within thee the elements which will crown thy efforts with success."

"If they are, old man, I will reward you handsomely," said the young man, as he turned to go. Laughing, the two left the room.

"And thou? Wouldst thou be novelist, poet or politician? What is thy secret desire, that thou hast sought aid of me?"

"None of these," answered Charles, who had been much impressed by what he had seen. "Among my fluids is there one that will give the touch that

will turn all to gold? If you have such an extract, I would ask aid of you."

"The touch of Midas! That is what thou wishest. Men from the creation have coveted it. Thou art young to be smitten with such desire. Tell me the reason."

"I cannot wed the woman I love until I have two millions. Do you wonder now, philosopher, that I wish this touch of Midas?"

"And dost thou remember the fate of Midas? I know not why it is so, but this desire for gold seems to wither the human heart. The affections are scorched by its fierce heat. I can give thee the touch thou wishest, but reflect well before thou dost accept it. The fate of Midas in its literal sense will not be thine; but thou wilt find that when thy two millions are accumulated that all thy being is merged into the one idea: Gold, gold, gold!"

"Be that as it may," answered Charles. "Like the others, I say, so ahead. If you can really give me this power of money-getting, I will cheerfully accept the consequences."

The doctor reached for two vials. "For this one time be true to thyself, be blended," he said. "After this thou wilt need but one."

"What are they?" queried the young man.

"Extract of Golden Rod and Stock. Leave the last with me, for thou wilt need it but this once. See! I have injected a double portion into thy veins. Be not alarmed at a slight illness; it will be well with thee and as thou wishest."

"How shall I use this?" asked Charles, putting the bottle into his vest pocket.

"As thou hast seen me do. But use not until thou feeldest thy powers failing."

III.

For the next few days all went as usual, but this once, Charles injected himself at his place of business as usual, and was beginning to berate himself as a fool for believing even for a short time in the efficacy of the Arabian's treatment; when on the ninth day after the inoculation, he was seized with severe pains in the head.

Compelled to give up his work, he retired to his bed, where he soon developed a high fever which rapidly merged into delirium.

Wildly he tossed and raved, and suddenly in the night there came a burst of music, nearer and nearer it seemed to come, and then while he listened enchanted, the music ceased as suddenly as it had begun. The mists cleared away from his mind, and he lay quietly, his mind unusually clear and active.

In the morning he arose, apparently as well as ever, but that strange clearness remained. Taking up the papers, he turned as usual to the stock reports. To his surprise he found that all stocks had fallen. With a new, clear wisdom, he saw that the fall was but temporary. Something within him told him that this was his opportunity. He went hastily to the stock exchange, taking with him the few hundreds which he possessed.

Men were frankly unloading everywhere. With keen vision and a sharpened judgment that amazed himself, Charles invested his little all and awaited the result. Before the next twenty-four hours had passed, stocks took an upward bound, regained their

old place, and were steadily climbing higher, leaving Charles Hendricks some thousands of dollars richer.

These he reinvested. In ten days he became the central figure on 'Change. Whatever he went into prospered. Men watching him said that he had only to touch a thing and it turned to gold. He became known by the name of Midas.

The two years passed, and he was worth \$2,000,000. Millionaire Anderson greeted him graciously whenever they met, but Charles, intent only on stocks and bonds, passed him coldly. To be a multimillionaire now became his ambition, and he grew obvious to every human interest save that which brooded in his nearer his goal. Visions of untold wealth floated through his mind, and soon his name became synonymous with all that was keen, calculating, shrewd and hard. And so the years passed.

Once he visited an insane asylum. Among the inmates there was one who raved, foamed at the mouth, while he struggled violently with his keeper. In the distorted features, he recognized with a shudder the face of the budding politician who had blossomed into successful one, having held the gubernatorial chair of the state for two terms, been senator also for two, and had been spoken of in connection with the White House.

He left the building hurriedly, his mind reverting shudderingly to the fate of his other companions. In the hospital the poet lay, a physical wreck; helpless for life. A little mound in the cemetery was all that remained of the novelist save four books which the critics said were of lasting fame. Congratulating himself on his own good fortune, he returned to his counting room.

At last there came a day when Charles Hendricks stood by the grave of the woman whom he had once loved. Untold wealth warmed his command; but, standing there while "ashes were returned to ashes, and dust to dust," he knew that he had lost the best part of life; that like Midas of old, he was accursed.

Too late came the knowledge that such power as was his was a curse to its possessor. He turned from the grave of a broken heart and crept back to his gold, alone, accursed.

How This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure. F. J. CHENEY & CO., Props.

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Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O. WALKING KINNAN & MARVIN.

Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Price 75c per bottle. Sold by all Druggists. Testimonials free.

Hall's family Pills are the best.

Monday and Tuesday, March 20 and 21, at Z. C. M. I.

Ladies specially invited to the grand spring millinery opening.

## HEART DISEASE.

SOME FACTS REGARDING THE RAPID INCREASE OF HEART TROUBLES.

Do Not Be Alarmed, But Look For the Cause.

Heart troubles, at least among the Americans, are certainly increasing, and while this may be largely due to the excitement and worry of American business life, it is more often the result of weak stomachs, of poor digestion.

Real organic disease is incurable; but not one case in a hundred of heart trouble is organic.

The close relation between heart trouble and poor digestion is because both organs are controlled by the same great nerves, the Sympathetic and Pneumogastric.

In another way, also, the heart is affected by the form of poor digestion, which causes gas and fermentation from half-digested food. There is a feeling of oppression and heaviness in the chest, caused by pressure of the distended stomach on the heart and lungs, interfering with their action; hence arises palpitation and short breath.

Poor digestion also poisons the blood, making it thin and watery, which irritates and weakens the heart.

The most sensible treatment for heart trouble is to improve the digestion and to insure the prompt assimilation of food.

This can be done by the regular use, after meals, of some safe, pleasant and effective digestive preparation, like Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets, which may be found at most drug stores, and which contain valuable, harmless digestive elements in a pleasant, convenient form.

It is safe to say that the regular persistent use of Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets at meal time will cure any form of stomach trouble except cancer of the stomach.

Full-sized package of these tablets sold by druggists at 50 cents. Little book on stomach troubles mailed free. Address F. A. Stuart Co., Marshall, Mich.

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